

California Department of Parks and Recreation
California State Parks Evaluation of Round 2 North Coast Regional
Stakeholder Group Draft Marine Protected Area Proposals
June 29, 2010

This document represents the California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR or California State Parks) evaluation of Round 2 draft marine protected area (MPA) proposals developed by the MLPA North Coast Regional Stakeholders Group (NCRSG). This evaluation was conducted by California State Parks Natural Resources Division staff in coordination with staff from the two California State Parks districts located in the MLPA North Coast Study Region. The evaluation is based on the California State Park guidance document distributed to the NCRSG on March 25, 2010.

In reviewing the draft proposed MPAs, the primary considerations were: 1) consistency of the proposed MPA classification with California State Parks unit purpose; 2) recognizable boundaries for management; 3) non-adjacent, proposed state marine parks (SMPs); 4) existing California State Park underwater units; and 5) clearly stated goals for the MPA.

Consistency of a proposed MPA with a California State Parks unit is determined by both the unit's classification and the goals described in its general plan. Within the north coast study region there are four basic terrestrial California State Parks classifications that may abut an MPA: State Park, State Beach, State Natural Reserve, and State Historic Park. Each California State Parks classification has its own specific purpose.

A State Park preserves outstanding natural, scenic, and cultural values, native fauna and flora, and the most significant examples of ecological regions of California, while making available for public enjoyment and education in a manner consistent with the preservation of its natural resources. Natural Preserves are subunits within the boundaries of California State Park units of outstanding natural or scientific significance. Natural Preserves, such as Ten Mile Dunes at MacKerricher State Park, preserve superlative features such as rare or endangered plant and animal species and their supporting ecosystems. State Natural Reserves, such as Jug Handle, are the most restrictive of California State Parks classifications. Within a State Natural Reserve, resource manipulation is kept at a minimum and the natural resources shall not be disturbed or removed for purposes other than scientific or management.

State Beaches are a class of State Recreational Areas, which are operated to provide outdoor recreation opportunities. State Beaches, such as Greenwood State Beach, are designed to provide diving, boating, fishing, and other beach-oriented recreational activities. Finally, State Historic Parks are designed to preserve objects or sites of historical, archeological, or scientific interest. Areas outside the primary historic zone may be used for limited recreational opportunities. Point Cabrillo Light Station is an example of a State Historic Park.

There are a total of four draft MPA proposals that were evaluated, two from the NCRSG Ruby Work Group and two from the NCRSG Sapphire Work Group. Approximately one half of the MPAs in each proposal are adjacent to a total of ten California State Parks terrestrial units. Of the proposed MPAs located adjacent to parks land, most are state marine conservation areas. One state marine park, located at Big River on the Mendocino coast, has been included in all four draft proposals. There is also a state marine recreational management area proposed at Stone Lagoon in Humboldt Lagoons State Park. There are no proposed state marine reserves located adjacent to a California State Parks unit.

The following is a list of issues or conflicts with California State Parks guidance for the draft MPA proposals. In the case of clarifying boundaries, it is recommended to assure that the description of the boundary in the proposal text matches the lines drawn on the map. The issues are presented for both proposals of each work group.

Ruby Group Proposal 1

- Stone Lagoon SMRMA

The proposed MPA will allow only tribal gathering and waterfowl hunting and prohibits recreational fishing. This is a good example of a MPA proposal that is in conflict with a California State Parks unit's purpose or general plan. The lagoon is surrounded by Humboldt Lagoons State Park and is used by canoe & kayak anglers. Though the extent of this recreation is limited to two boat access points, it has been a consistent public use for years and is mentioned in the park's general plan. There are several boat-in or hike-in campsites used by anglers that are attracted by the solitude this lagoon affords. This conflict can be resolved by changing the designation from state marine recreational management area to state marine park (SMP) that allows only take of finfish by hook & line in addition to tribal gathering.

- Ten Mile SMCA

The southern boundary needs to be aligned with the south boundary of the state park subunit, which will also anchor it on the headland at the mouth of Ten Mile River. (Figure 3)

- Ten Mile Estuary SMCA

The westward boundary of this state marine conservation area (SMCA) is not aligned with a landmark and increases difficulty of enforcement for ranger staff. This can be resolved by finding a landmark at the mouth of the river and aligning the boundary with it. Also, the south boundary on the downstream end should be aligned with the State Park boundary; the MPA should not overlap into State Park land. (Figure 3)

- MacKerricher SMCA

Aligning the north boundary of this SMCA with a landmark would make it easier to recognize and enforce. The stated goal for this MPA is unclear in that it doesn't

articulate the site-specific rationale; it should be rewritten to be more specific in its goal for the MPA. (Figure 4)

- Point Cabrillo SMCA

The goal of this proposed MPA is unclear in that states that it provides goal 3 opportunities, yet it only allows for tribal gathering. No other recreational take is allowed. Rationale needs to be more specific about which part of goal 3 is being addressed. (Figure 6)

- Russian Gulch SMCA

This MPA has the same issues as MacKerricher SMCA does in terms of stated goals.

- Big River SMP

The boundary of this SMP should be revised to only include that portion of the river from its downstream boundary to the boundary of Mendocino Woodlands State Park. Because the streambed of Big River within the park is part of the state park property, it is not possible to include that portion of the river in the state marine park designation. (Figure 7)

- Van Damme SMCA

This MPA has the same issues as MacKerricher SMCA does in terms of stated goals.

- Navarro River Estuary SMCA

The westward boundary of this SMCA is unclear, not aligned with a landmark, and increases difficulty of enforcement for ranger staff. This can be resolved by finding a landmark at the mouth of the river and aligning the boundary with that landmark. (Figure 8)

Ruby Group Proposal 2

- Ten Mile Estuary SMCA

The westward boundary of this SMCA is not aligned with a landmark and increases difficulty of enforcement for ranger staff. This can be resolved by finding a landmark at the mouth of the river and aligning the boundary with that landmark. Also, the south boundary on the downstream end should be aligned with the State Park boundary; the MPA should not overlap into State Park land. (Figure 3)

- Big River SMP

The boundary of this SMP should be revised to only include that portion of the river from its downstream boundary to the boundary of Mendocino Woodlands State Park. Because the streambed of Big River within the park is part of the state park property, it is not possible to include that portion of the river in the state marine park designation. (Figure 7)

- Navarro River Estuary SMCA

The westward boundary of this SMCA is unclear, not aligned with a landmark, and increases difficulty of enforcement for ranger staff. This can be resolved by finding a landmark at the mouth of the river and aligning the boundary with that landmark. (Figure 8)

Sapphire Group Proposal 1

- Pyramid Point SMCA

This proposed MPA will prohibit shore fishing at a State Beach, which is in direct conflict with the purpose of the unit.

- Wilson Rock SMCA

The northern boundary of this MPA overlaps into the south-most portion of Del Norte Redwoods State Park, falling in the middle of a public beach. The boundary should be moved south to the southern boundary of the park. (Figure 1)

- Reading Rock SMCA

This SMCA prohibits shore fishing along a portion of Gold Bluffs Beach, which is in direct conflict with the purpose of the park to provide access for recreational fishing. The northern boundary of this MPA falls 1.25 miles north of the Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park southern boundary, and is not aligned with any landmark. This makes enforcement of the proposed no fishing regulation more difficult for ranger staff. This can be resolved by revising the regulations to allow for shore fishing, or if that is not possible, by aligning the MPA boundary with a landmark or State Park boundary. (Figure 2)

- Ten Mile Estuary SMCA

The westward boundary of this SMCA is not aligned with a landmark and increases difficulty of enforcement for ranger staff. This can be resolved by finding a landmark at the mouth of the river and aligning the boundary with that landmark. Also, the southern boundary on the downstream end should be aligned with the State Park boundary; the MPA should not overlap into State Park land. (Figure 3)

- MacKerricher SMCA

The southern boundary of this SMCA should be aligned with the southern boundary of the park, which is at Glass Beach. The park polygon on Marine Map does not include an accurate southern boundary for MacKerricher State Park. State Parks staff can provide an accurate version. (Figure 5)

- Point Cabrillo SMCA

The goal of this proposed MPA is unclear in that states that it provides goal 3 opportunities, yet it only allows for tribal gathering and commercial take. No other recreational take is allowed.

- Big River SMP

The boundary of this SMP should be revised to only include that portion of the river from its downstream boundary to the boundary of Mendocino Woodlands State Park.

Because the streambed of Big River within the park is a part of the state park property, it is not possible to include that portion of the river in the state marine park designation. (Figure 7)

- Navarro River Estuary SMCA

The westward boundary of this SMCA is unclear, not aligned with a landmark, and increases difficulty of enforcement for ranger staff. This can be resolved by finding a landmark at the mouth of the river and upstream, and aligning the boundary with it. (Figure 8)

Sapphire Group Proposal 2

- Pyramid Point SMCA

This proposed MPA will prohibit shore fishing at a State Beach, which is a conflict with the purpose of the unit.

- Wilson Rock SMCA

The north boundary of this MPA overlaps into the south-most portion of Del Norte Redwoods State Park, falling in the middle of a public beach. The boundary should be moved south the southern boundary of the park. (Figure 1)

- Reading Rock SMCA

This SMCA prohibits shore fishing along a portion of Gold Bluffs Beach, which is in conflict with the purpose of the park to provide access for recreational fishing in this location. The north boundary of this MPA falls 1.25 miles north of the Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park south boundary, and is not aligned with any landmark. This makes enforcement of the proposed no fishing regulation more difficult for ranger staff. This can be resolved by revising the regulations to allow for shore fishing, or if that is not possible, by aligning the MPA boundary with a landmark or State Park boundary. In addition, the stated goals are unclear for this MPA. It is stated in the site-specific rationale that the MPA would serve as a backbone due to the fact it only allows for tribal gathering. Yet in the regulations it allows for commercial and recreational take of crab and smelt. The goals should be rewritten to reflect the true intent and regulations of the SMCA. (Figure 2)

- Ten Mile Estuary SMCA

The westward boundary of this SMCA is not aligned with a landmark and increases difficulty of enforcement for ranger staff. This can be resolved by finding a landmark at the mouth of the river and aligning the boundary with it. Also, the south boundary on

the downstream end should be aligned with the State Park boundary- MPA should not overlap into State Park land. (Figure 3)

- Point Cabrillo SMCA

The goal of this proposed MPA is unclear in that states that it provides goal 3 opportunities, yet it only allows for tribal gathering and commercial take. No other recreational take is allowed. Rationale needs to be more specific about which part of goal 3 is being addressed.

- Big River SMP

The boundary of this SMP should be revised to only include that portion of the river from its downstream boundary to the boundary of Mendocino Woodlands State Park. Because the streambed of Big River within the park is part of the state park property, it is not possible to include that portion of the river in the state marine park designation. (Figure 7)

The tables at the end of this document include California State Parks' evaluation of Round 2 draft MPA proposals in matrix form. There are seven categories related to California State Parks guidance in statement form which are characterized by "yes", "no", or "unclear" in the case of each proposed MPA. Each category is described:

- Provide special protection for intertidal species and habitats: Does this MPA protect rocky intertidal habitats that may be visited and appreciated by parks visitors?
- Provide important venues for special marine interpretation and education programs: Do the terrestrial parks adjacent to a proposed MPA have existing interpretation infrastructure and education programs already in place?
- Facilitate law enforcement needed to protect and perpetuate important natural and cultural resource values: Does the boundary placement and regulations of the proposed MPA make it relatively easy to enforce? Are the regulations clear and understandable by both the public and park rangers? Is there access for enforcement to most of the MPA?
- MPA classification is consistent with the park unit general plan or purpose: Does the designation of a proposed MPA either reduce natural resource protection or prohibit a recreational activity important to the adjacent park unit, as established in its general plan?
- MPA boundary is feasible: Is the boundary of the proposed MPA clear and recognizable from the ground? Is it anchored on a landmark or park boundary?
- Minimal effect on popular recreational activities: Does the proposed MPA maintain popular recreational activities in adjacent parks for which public access has been provided?

- Stated goals for MPAs: Does the proposed MPA have clearly defined goals that are related to its designation, placement, and regulations?

Following the tables are maps showing infeasible MPA boundaries and suggestions for resolving the problem.

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California State Parks Round 2 Evaluation- Ruby Proposal 1								
Proposed MPA	State Park Unit(s)	Provide special protection for intertidal species and habitats.	Provide important venues for special marine interpretation and education programs	Facilitate law enforcement needed to protect and perpetuate important natural and cultural resource values.	MPA designation is consistent with the park unit General Plan or purpose.	MPA boundary is feasible	Minimal effect on popular recreational activities	Stated goals for MPAs
Reading Rock Nearshore SMCA	Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Stone Lagoon SMRMA	Humboldt Lagoons State Park	no	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes
Ten Mile SMCA	MacKerricher State Park	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes
Ten Mile Estuary SMCA	MacKerricher State Park	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes
MacKerricher SMCA	MacKerricher State Park	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	unclear
Point Cabrillo SMCA	Point Cabrillo Light Station State Historic Park	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	unclear
Russian Gulch SMCA	Russian Gulch State Park	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	unclear
Big River SMP	Mendocino Woodlands State Park	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Van Damme SMCA	Van Damme State Park	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	unclear
Navarro River Estuary SMCA	Navarro River Redwoods State Park	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes

California State Parks Round 2 Evaluation- Ruby Proposal 2								
Proposed MPA	State Park Unit(s)	Provide special protection for intertidal species and habitats.	Provide important venues for special marine interpretation and education programs	Facilitate law enforcement needed to protect and perpetuate important natural and cultural resource values.	MPA designation is consistent with the park unit General Plan or purpose.	MPA boundary is feasible	Minimal effect on popular recreational activities	Stated goals for MPAs
Pyramid Point SMCA	Pelican State Beach	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Reading Rock Nearshore SMCA	Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Ten Mile Estuary SMCA	MacKerricher State Park	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes
Big River SMP	Mendocino Woodlands State Park	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Navarro River Estuary SMCA	Navarro River Redwoods State Park	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes

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California State Parks Round 2 Evaluation- Sapphire Proposal 1								
Proposed MPA	State Park Unit(s)	Provide special protection for intertidal species and habitats.	Provide important venues for special marine interpretation and education programs	Facilitate law enforcement needed to protect and perpetuate important natural and cultural resource values.	MPA designation is consistent with the park unit General Plan or purpose.	MPA boundary is feasible	Minimal effect on popular recreational activities	Stated goals for MPAs
Pyramid Point SMCA	Pelican State Beach	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes
Wilson Rock SMCA	Del Norte Redwoods State Park	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	yes
Reading Rock SMCA	Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park	no	yes	no	no	no	no	yes
Ten Mile SMCA	Mackerricher State Park	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Ten Mile Estuary SMCA	Mackerricher State Park	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes
Mackerricher SMCA	Mackerricher State Park	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Point Cabrillo SMCA	Point Cabrillo Light Station State Historic Park	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	unclear
Big River SMP	Mendocino Woodlands State Park	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Navarro River Estuary SMCA	Navarro River Redwoods State Park	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes

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California State Parks Round 2 Evaluation- Sapphire Proposal 2								
Proposed MPA	State Park Unit(s)	Provide special protection for intertidal species and habitats.	Provide important venues for special marine interpretation and education programs	Facilitate law enforcement needed to protect and perpetuate important natural and cultural resource values.	MPA designation is consistent with the park unit General Plan or purpose.	MPA boundary is feasible	Minimal effect on popular recreational activities	Stated goals for MPAs
Pyramid Point SMCA	Pelican State Beach	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes
Wilson Rock SMCA	Del Norte Redwoods State Park	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	yes
Reading Rock SMCA	Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park	no	yes	no	no	no	no	unclear
Ten Mile SMCA	MacKerricher State Park	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Ten Mile Estuary SMCA	MacKerricher State Park	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes
Point Cabrillo SMCA	Point Cabrillo Light Station State Historic Park	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	unclear
Big River SMP	Mendocino Woodlands State Park	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes

Suggestions for correcting infeasible MPA boundaries

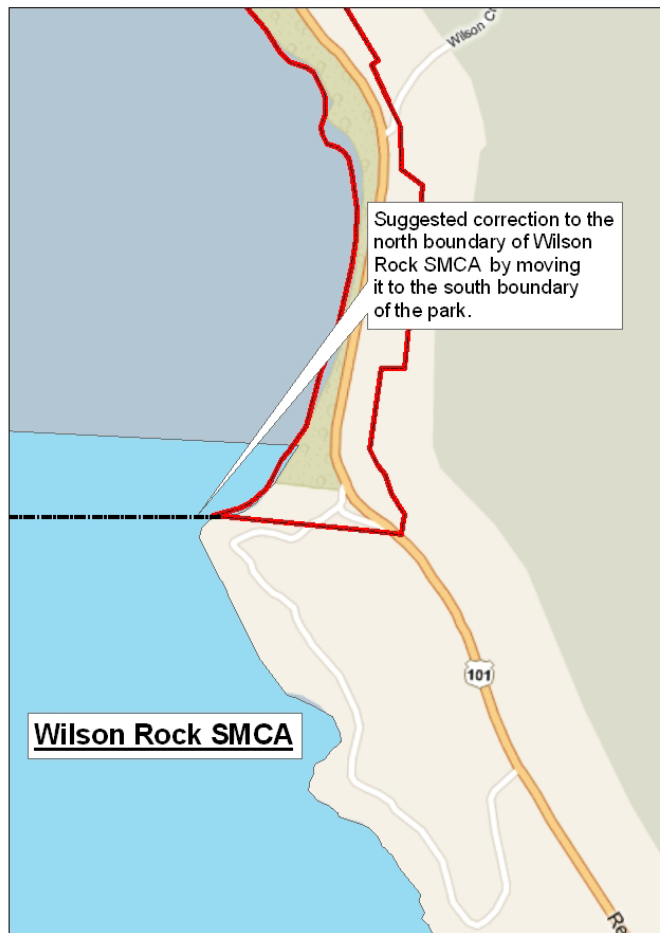


Figure 1. Sapphire Proposals 1 & 2

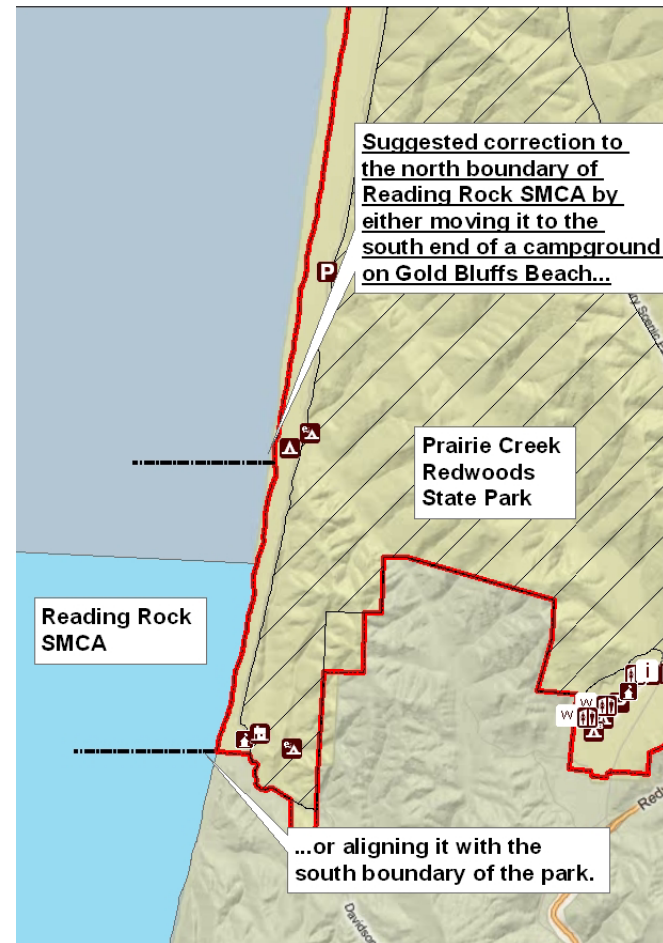


Figure 2. Sapphire Proposals 1 & 2

* black solid lines indicate park boundaries, checked lines indicate suggested MPA boundary.

Suggestions for correcting infeasible MPA boundaries

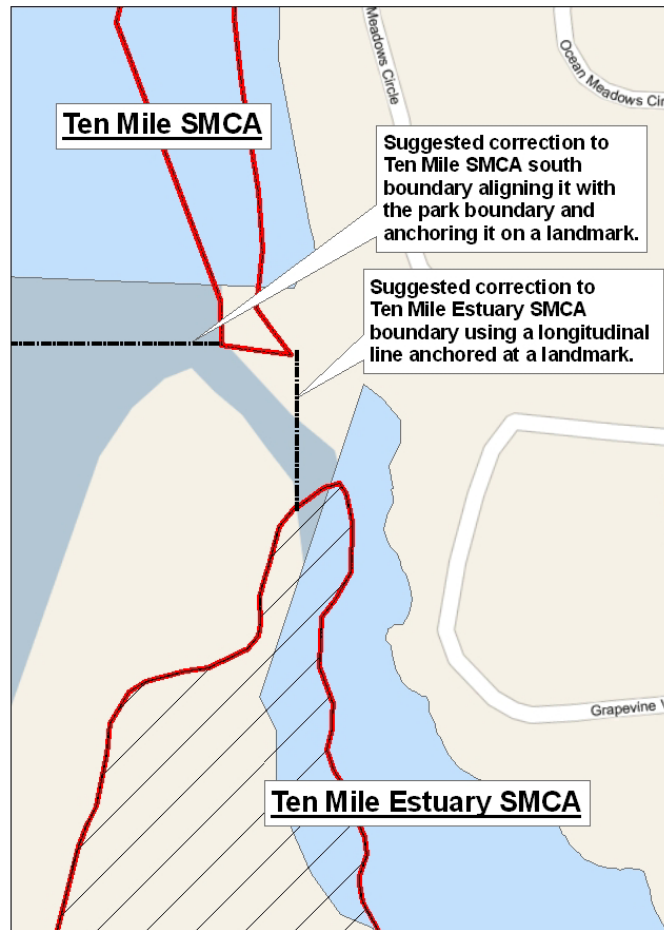


Figure 3. Included in all proposals

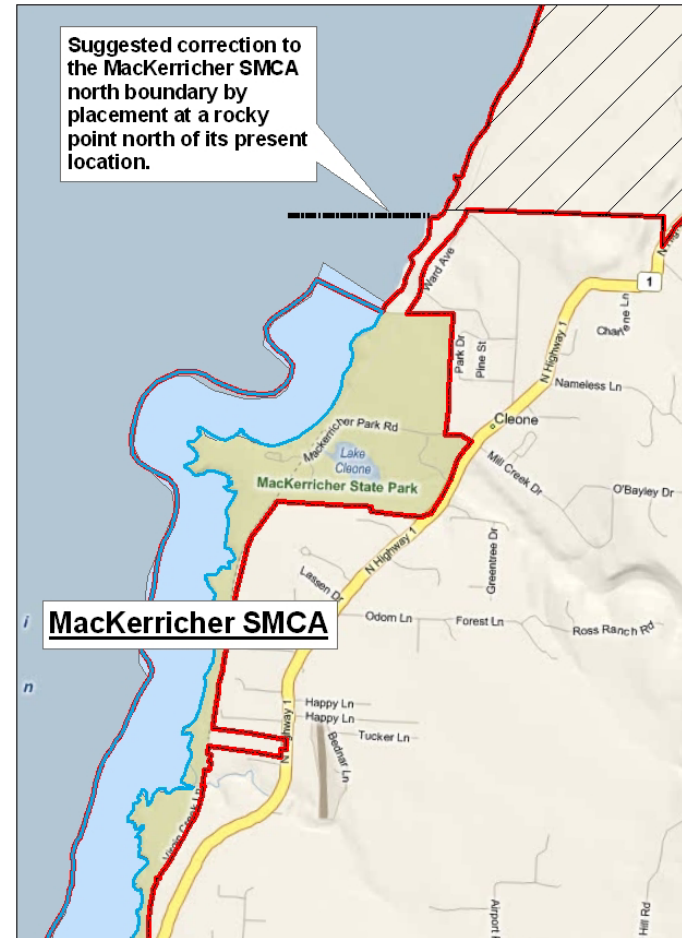


Figure 4. Ruby Proposal 1

* black solid lines indicate park boundaries, checked lines indicate suggested MPA boundary.

Suggestions for correcting infeasible MPA boundaries

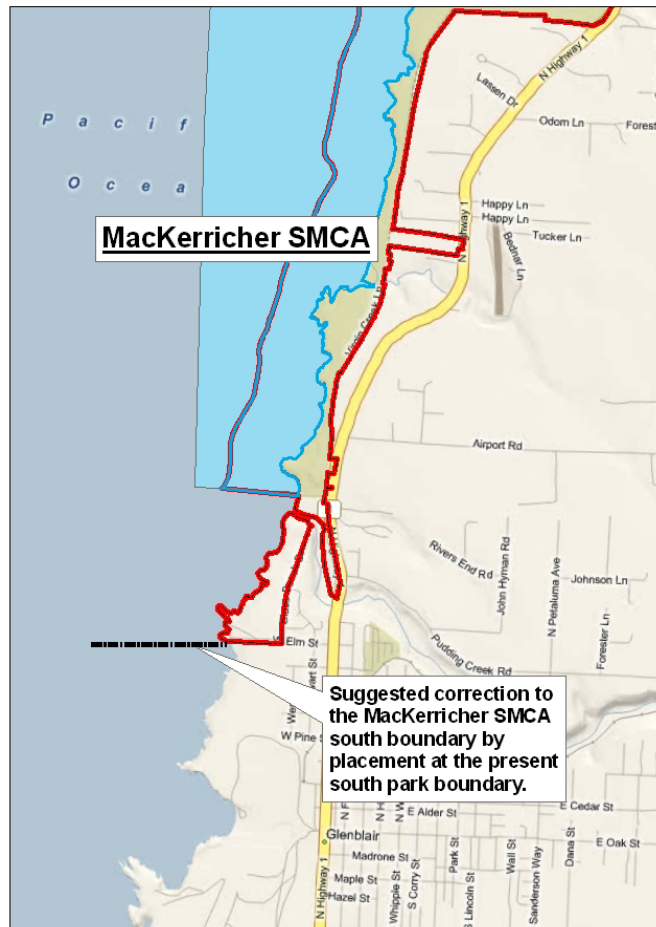


Figure 5. Sapphire Proposal 1

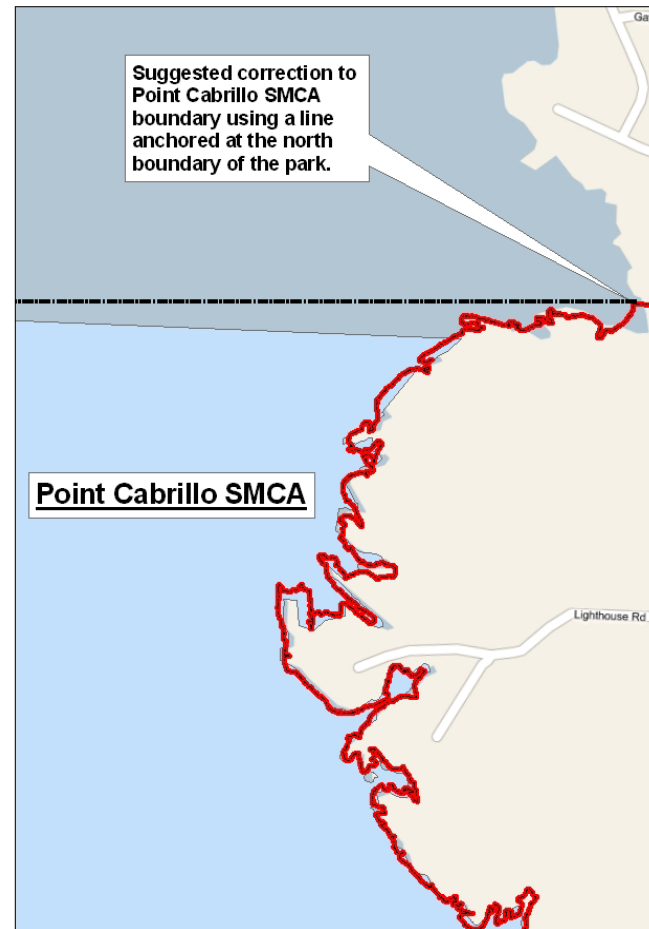


Figure 6. Ruby Proposal 1

* black solid lines indicate park boundaries, checked lines indicate suggested MPA boundary.

Suggestions for correcting infeasible MPA boundaries

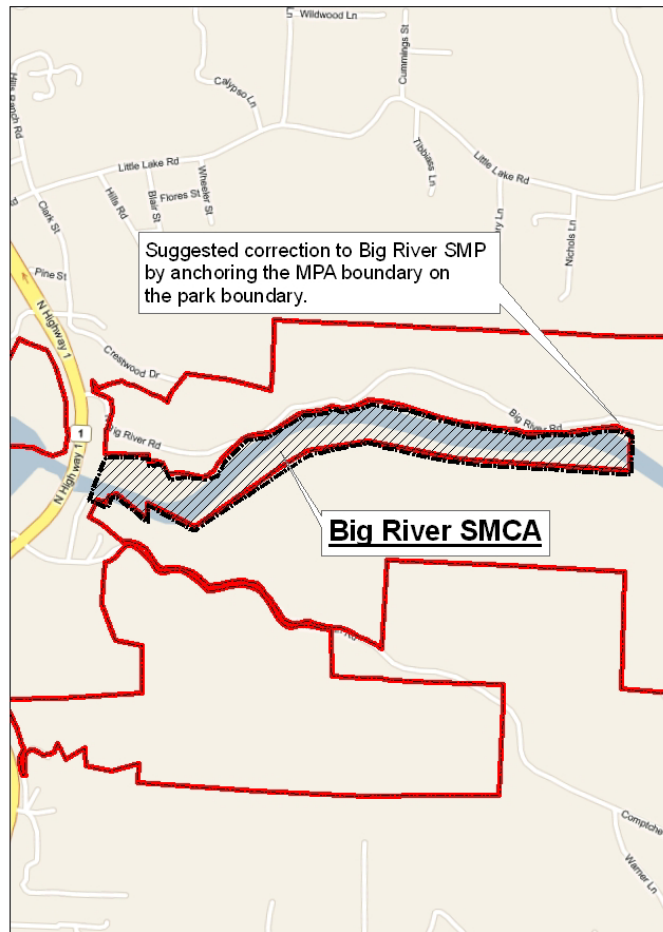


Figure 7. Included in all proposals

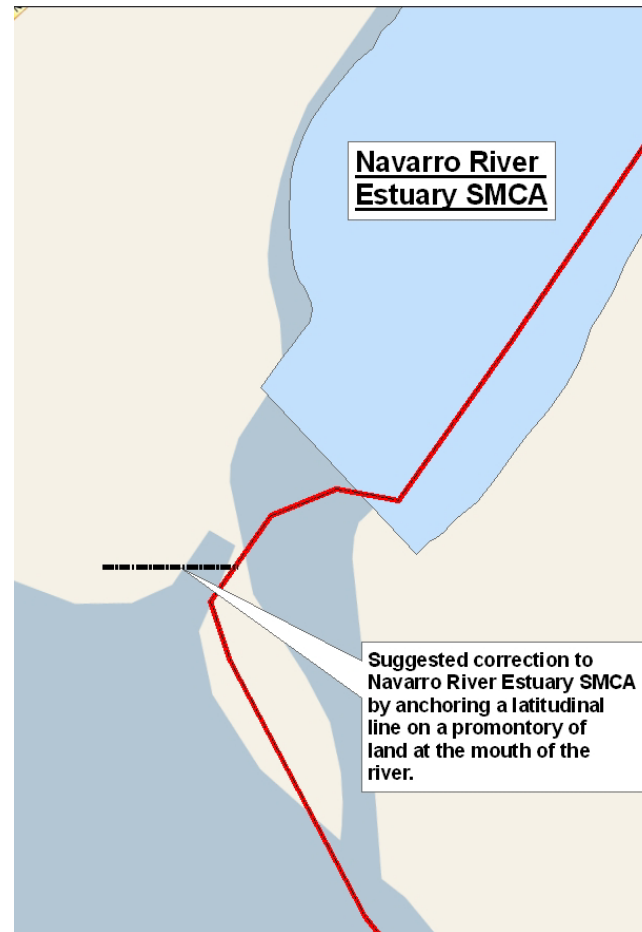


Figure 8. Ruby Proposals 1 & 2, Sapphire Proposal 1

* black solid lines indicate park boundaries, checked lines indicate suggested MPA boundary.